



State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CEQA#8484

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Department of Parks and Recreation
1416 Ninth Street
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

PROJECT TITLE: Los Caballos Cleanup

LOCATION: Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, Highway 79 and Cuyamaca Forest Road **COUNTY:** San Diego

DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT: Cleanup former Los Caballos horse camp at Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. Area contains various structural remnants and other debris that were associated with the former horse camp; as well, topographical alterations such as graded roads and pads are contributing to erosion. Currently, the area is blighted by closed area signs, caution tape, barricades and other interim management mechanisms.

These are the elements of the project description:

- 1) Remove all debris and structural remains that can be removed with minimal ground disturbance and monitoring by Parks archaeologist and Native American monitor. This would include removal of pipe corrals by unbolting panels and by using a mechanized vehicle to pull upright posts directly up and out of the ground. The activities of the mechanized vehicle will be monitored by District Maintenance Chief (with input from the District Archaeologist and District Environmental Scientist) as per park standards. All surface trash and debris will be removed by hand, monitored by Parks staff.
- 2) Restore the drainage to its natural state by removing deposited soil, as well as the culvert, thereby eliminating further maintenance needs and the possibility of heavy erosion and sediment transportation into known *Limnanthes* habitat. This would require the presence of a Native American and archaeological monitor as well as overview by District Environmental Scientist as per park standards.
- 3) Remove existing asphalt from entrance road, de-compact soil using 4 inch teeth on excavator bucket to scarify the earth and plant native trees. This would require the presence of a Native American and archaeological monitor as well as overview by District Environmental Scientist as per park standards.
- 4) Reconnect the Los Caballos Trail that formerly traveled into and out of the Day Use area using an alignment that travels through the former bathroom leach lines and pad and up the hill to the southwest. The trail will involve a) the construction of approximately 350 feet of new trail, b) 370 feet of improvement to the previously existing trail, c) 45 feet of removal of old trail, and d/e) additional improvements. All trail work will avoid archaeological deposits or *Limnanthes* habitat. Archaeological and Native American monitors as well as overview by District Environmental Scientist will be required as per park standards.
 - a) New trail construction will consist of light brushing and tread construction requiring excavation to a depth of approximately 4 inches on a short section where needed.
 - b) Previously existing trail lengths will require the excavation of soil to an approximate depth of 12 inches to remove a berm and create an outsloped trail tread, raise the trail tread and eliminate the entrenchment. Wood waterbars and check dams may be installed on the steep section of existing trail to hold soils in place and reduce erosion.
 - c) Approximately 45 feet of old entrenched trail will be filled to existing grade.
 - d) A sign and post will be placed at the intersection of the new trail section and the existing trail to direct users to the proper trail route.
 - e) No more than 640 linear feet of split rail fence will be installed adjacent to the trail to confine the trail user to the designated route.
- 5) Work with interested Kumeyaay people and parks archaeologist to identify appropriate recognition such as interpretive panels along the reconnected trail or along Stonewall Mine Road.

PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING THE PROJECT: California Department of Parks and Recreation

NAME OF DIVISION OR DISTRICT CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT: Colorado Desert District

EXEMPT STATUS: ☒ Categorical Exemption Class: 1, 4 Section: 15301, 15304

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: Project consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public structures, facilities, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use; minor alterations in the condition of land and vegetation that do not include healthy, mature or scenic trees and is included as "trail construction or realignment" in the list of DPR-exempt activities in accordance with CCR § 15300.4.

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Mike Wells, Ph.D., District Superintendent

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